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A Dialogue Between George the Third of Great-Britain and his Ministers

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et al.: Dialogue

[REPRINT]

A

DIALOGUE,

BETWEEN

GEORGE the THIRD of GREAT-BRITAIN,

and his MINISTERS ; giving an Account of the

Late **MOB** in **LONDON**,

And the original of the Sect called

S H A K E R S .

Who lately went from ENGLAND to NORTH-

AMERICA.

L O N D O N, Printed :
W O R C E S T E R, Re-printed, 1782.

A

D I A L O G U E, &c.

London, 1781.

WHEN the people on this Island began some time ago to enter into Associations, in order to defeat the schemes of wicked and corrupt rulers, the King and his Ministers were much alarmed. A Cabinet Council was held at Whitehall in consequence thereof. There were present among others his Majesty, Lord Bute (*under the rose*) Lord North, Lord Germaine, Lord Mansfield, and a well known torystical Bishop. After the debates on this important business were over; the following conversation or Dialogue took place, which laid that scene of disturbance and confusion, which lately took place in this Metropolis, and by which so many innocent persons unfortunately lost their lives: By this conference we are also led to the discovery of a low and contemptible scheme for raising commotions and disturbing the peace of our brethren in America, by introducing a new, strange and foolish religion, which, unaccountable as it may seem, it is said has already created much mischief in that quarter. The conversation was began by his Majesty, and was nearly as follows, viz.

His Majesty. These Associations and Committees of correspondence, now forming with such rapid progress in England, appear to be similar to those by which the Americans first dared openly to oppose our government.

Lord Mansfield. Very true, may it please your Majesty, and you cannot be too sensible of the great danger of such unlawful combinations.

Lord Bute. Indeed, may it please your Majesty, I look upon these measures to be worthy of our most serious attention.

Lord North. May it please your Majesty to allow me to express my sentiments relative to the alarming opposition now making in this realm to the measures we have adopted for the security of your Majesty's government—For the people in a cool and determined manner to associate and enter into covenants, and chuse men of property and influence to preside over and direct them in the means of opposition to government, appears to me to be big with the most fatal consequences.

Lord Germaine. These are the very measures which were taken by the Americans in the beginning of their rebellion. Your Majesty may recollect their regular advances in this way. Ten thousand mobs could not have done half so much injury to this Kingdom.

Lord Mansfield. It is a just maxim, That desperate diseases require desperate remedies. Mobs, may it please your Majesty, often produce the best effects; they tend to strengthen government, and in their consequences to weaken the opposition of the people, as they introduce anarchy and confusion, whereby the more serious and sensible part of the community are plundered and ill-treated, which will make them rather submit to some small infringement of their liberties, than to be harrassed by a mob raised out of the lowest and most abandoned of the people; and even acknowledge that absolute government is better than none.

Lord Germaine. We must then take the hint, and raise a mob that will effectually answer our purpose at this day.

His Majesty. My Lords, I look to you for advice in this important matter—if you think it worthy of attention you will please to point out the means of redress.

Lord Bute. May it please your Majesty, your faithful servants now present have devised ways and means to counteract those dangerous measures adopted by the people; we only want your royal approbation.

His Majesty. Please to make them known to me.

Lord North. May it please your Majesty, we really think it expedient to raise a mob chiefly out of the lower sort of the people, to be headed by a person of some consequence. This riotous assembly when raised may easily be led to commit such outrages as will alarm all the sober and more sensible part of the nation, who will then wish for and request the interposition of government. Let military power be exerted in a proper moment—a few of the most worthless be taken, and after trial executed, and at the same time extend mercy to a few who are the least atrocious. The riot will then subside—a new face will appear upon our political affairs—the different passions of the people will be wrought upon—the moderate men will have more influence upon those in opposition—the dignity of government will acquire new lustre—those in opposition will loose ground—and finally all their pleasing expectations from Associations, &c. will vanish like the dew upon the rising of the morning sun.

His Majesty. Your scheme appears something plausible—But how can the matter be properly conducted? For it appears to me to be an exceeding delicate affair.

Lord North. May it please your Majesty, some trusty person or persons must be employed who are favourites of the people;—your Majesty's faithful ministers have already had a conference with Lord Gordon—he has the petition of the protestant association in trust, to present to your Majesty

and Parliament against the bill of Toleration, &c. His character answers to a hair. — He has agreed if your Majesty approves the measure, to issue an advertisement, inviting the people to attend him in presenting the petition; and we have agreed with a number of cunning, artful fellows to influence the mob so assembled to burn a few buildings, &c. at which time we can set on our dogs of war, &c.

Lord Bute. And one thing more must be done, the leading magistrates in the city must be brought into the secret, otherwise they will blow up our whole scheme by raising the *posse comitatus* on the first appearance of Lord Gordon's advertisement.

His Majesty. That's right, a better plan could not be devised. — I thank you my good friends. As for Lord Gordon I will make him shine in due time; he is young and may live to enjoy his earnings.

Lord Mansfield. We have assured Lord Gordon that his popularity will be equal to his most sanguine expectations—and he appears to be well satisfied with the idea of being the darling of the people. Something, however, must be done to bring him off from that punishment, which in the eye of the law he will justly merit. It will be proper that he undergo confinement, and stand a trial for his life; but matters being properly managed, there will be no danger of his suffering a greater evil than a confinement for a short time, and we make no doubt but he will receive full compensation for that inconvenience by your Majesty's royal bounty.

His Majesty. He may rely on my assistance—and I think the sooner this plan is put in execution the better.

Lord Germaine. It is now an excellent time, as we have caused such a clamour to be raised against popery.

His Majesty. I could wish we had as good a plan to settle our affairs in America.

Lord Germaine. The people in Great-Britain are pleased with the notion of our having a right to tax America; they think it will help to relieve them of their burthens; besides an English chimney-sweeper plumes himself on his English blood, and thinks he has a right to govern and make laws for America.

Lord Bute. I fear, may it please your Majesty that all our money, blood and treasure expended there is lost, and America also. The money we have expended in bribery seems to have had but little good effect, but few of those we have retained appear to act conformable to our wishes; they seem to have but little courage to stand forth in the defence of our interest.

Lord North. We must make some allowance for that, our affairs are so

ruinous there, that they see they stand a great chance to be hanged or be obliged to leave their country forever, and self-preservation is one of the first laws of nature we all know: But we must make use of every stratagem; we find they answer when nothing else will. My Lord *Germaine* has lately had intelligence from some agents we have lately sent to America, to work upon the superstition of the people there. They have had tolerable success. My Lord will inform your Majesty concerning them.

His Majesty. My Lord *Germaine* I am all attention.

Lord Germaine. May it please your Majesty, our accounts from the persons who were sent to propagate a new religions scheme in America are very flattering. They make converts daily, and it is merry to hear of the weakness and folly of their tenets, and how aptly adapted to work on the foolish and superstitious passions of the most ignorant of the Americans. You must note, Sir, they have ever been taught to believe in miracles and super-natural operations. Their leaders, our agents, who stile themselves elders, profess to have all these powers, viz. To heal the sick, lame, wounded, &c. to have the gift of prophesy, divine revelations, and of conversing in unknown tongues, &c. and to be perfect and infallible; the spirit, as they term it, works upon and agitates their whole bodies; they have holy dances, turnings, shakings of the head and limbs, fall down and have terrible agitations; and many excel so much in these things, especially their converts, that they appear meagre, pale, and their visages ghastly; they are taught that they must confess their sins to their elders, and at such times are inquired of, Whether they have been guilty of taking up arms, which is represented as the greatest sin; whether they have been guilty of carnal knowledge with brutes; whether they have been guilty of whoredom, and with how many women; whether they have had carnal knowledge of a woman in her pregnancy, &c. and at the confession of each sin kneel and put up ejaculations to Heaven for pardon: The wretched converts to this religion, flock after their teachers, and at certain places are entertained on free cost, and are led to believe that the means of their support is furnished in a miraculous manner: This religion, contemptible as it may appear, is calculated to infatuate weak minds; and those who are but little acquainted with the construction of the human body, really think the teachers of this scheme have power from Heaven to work miracles, and never consider that the violent agitations of their bodies in the excise of their absurd shakings, will in particular cases give a fresh spring to the blood, and cause a circulation in parts which were before obstructed; and by means of which people who were before lame, may chance by the violent frenzy they have

worked themselves into, cause a circulation to take place in a lame limb, and and thereby recover the use of it; this is held up as a real miracle, and does not fail to bring over fresh converts, particularly of those whose nerves are weak. They are taught to believe that the time draws near when the whole of the saints shall be sealed, and when the remaining wicked, among whom are those who have taken arms against us, shall be destroyed, to make room for the saints to reign with Christ a thousand years. They are great adepts in the use of the scriptures, and never fail to interpret it directly to their purpose. These people, if properly increased, might be worked up to any thing, and to any purpose by their leaders, on whom they solely depend for direction, only let them have a divine revelation to take arms and destroy rebels to God, and rebels to man; but I fear we are almost too late in this affair—we should have began sooner—but it may be that we may yet use these Shaking Quakers, as they are called, to good advantage—I look upon them at least *late* recruits for Britain.

Bishop. I have often been told that the people in some of the colonies were great bigots in their religion; especially the dissenters—I am somewhat surprised that these Shaking Quakers should have any influence on them, especially as they are reputed to be foremost in the rebellion, and great opposers to any religious scheme that bears any resemblance to popery.—Now, if I am rightly informed, this new scheme bears a strong resemblance in many particulars to the catholick church—for instance, their profession of being perfect, infallible, confessions of sin, bodily agitations, out-side shews, &c. this answers directly to the mother papal church, together with their power of working miracles, &c. However, if we can but get this scheme to go down, it will have, I believe, a good tendency to cut the sinews of their rebellion, as the numerous converts will refuse to bear arms against the forces sent to subdue the Americans by your Majesty.

His Majesty. I could wish the plan might succeed—but I must confess I am not without my doubts.

Lord Germaine. May it please your Majesty, our agents, the teachers of this strange religion, are very cunning, and cover their designs thick with art.

Lord North. It is certain from the intelligence we have received—that these people have made great progress in carrying on their plan—And it is well known that when a people are deluded by an appearance of supernatural power, that great things have and may still be done toward bringing them under a proper subjection to government, when the force of arms have failed.

Bishop. All governments that are worth any thing are supported by the influence of the clergy---no Bishops, no King, is the old true maxim.

Lord Bute. I am a great friend to the clergy, and am sensible of their importance in the pillars of our state, no gentlemen have so unanimously supported our measures for the recovery of America, as the Lords Spiritual.

Lord North. May it please your Majesty, we may see by the easy manner in which the Americans are taken and duped by those shakers, that the bulk of the people there were never fitted by wisdom and virtue for freemen; such ignorant and stupid wretches ought never to be free---they never acted from any principle of knowledge, founded in their understandings, in their rebellion and opposition to our government; they were dictated by only a few speculative men who foresaw the evil of our claims of making laws for them in all cases whatsoever.

Lord Germaine. But, Sir, you must acknowledge that some of our laws; by which their charters were almost annihilated, and they subjected to be brought to England for trial, &c. might be seen through by weak minds.

Lord North. That's true, Sir, and were intended to be seen by the commonality, you know, Sir, we had our aims by drawing them into rebellion, but consequences have turned out contrary to our expectations.

His Majesty. True, gentlemen—I have been waiting for the joyful news of the conquest of the rebels in America, and expecting it as a consequence of your councils and measures, but have been continually disappointed; it is assurance, gentlemen, that I want, that the work will be soon compleated, and for the want of such assurance, my soul is almost starved. Shall it be said, that in the reign of George the Third, a native born King of Britain, that America was torn from his Crown! Forbid it Heaven! Forbid it Earth, and all the powers of darkness! Rather than such an event should take place, I would wish that the whole continent of America might be sunk into the bottom of the ocean, or consumed like Sodom with fire and brimstone, and every cursed rebel in it.

Bishop. Amen, may it please your Majesty.

Lord Bute. Amen.

Lord Germaine. Amen.

Lord North. Amen.

Lord Mansfield. Amen.

Bishop. And let all the people say Amen, and God bless and prosper your Majesty.

F I N I S.